5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

000 method of writing. There are some visionaries who imagine that before long China will throw over its method of writing and adopt the romanised method. Such a change is not likely to be made in this generation or the next.

212 While the peoples around China have adopted Chinese written characters, the Nosu have kept to their own. There must have been, in ages gone by, a larger number of people who could read. Now the wizards are practically the only people who have a knowledge of the written language.

There is no such thing as an alphabet in Nosu. The same principle that rules in Chinese rules also in Nosu. Each ideograph represents an idea. The language is monosyllabic. As mentioned before, vowel sounds end the words.

214 [791] Nearly all the books are in manuscript, and are handed down from father to son. The wizards who possess the key to these books are not very eager to pass on their knowledge to others, and I have not heard that others are very anxious to share this knowledge. I have been told that there are one or two Earth Eyes who are able to read Nosu, but I have no personal acquaintance with them. One Earth Eye, who was very friendly, had wooden blocks cut for the printing of a Nosu book, and then printed off quite a number, which he gave away to any who wished for a copy. On the back of the cover was the legend :

> A gift of a book to the princely man,
> With the hope that the princely man will live it out,
> If the princely man does not read the book,
> Will he kindly pass it on to someone else.

The Earth Eye was evidently imitating the Chinese, who look upon the printing and giving away of books as a very potent way of storing up merit in the bank of the other world.